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Letter dated 26 June 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward herewith an assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of April 2014 under the presidency of Nigeria (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) U. Joy **Ogwu**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 June 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Nigeria (April 2014)

Introduction

During the month of April 2014, under the presidency of Nigeria, the Security Council adopted six resolutions and issued 11 press statements. The Council held two open thematic debates, on security sector reform and women and peace and security, with a focus on sexual violence in conflict, and the quarterly open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. It also held a briefing on the prevention and fight against genocide, under the agenda item "Threats to international peace and security".

Africa

Burundi

On 8 April 2014, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, briefed Security Council members in closed consultations on the latest political developments in Burundi. He advised that a youth wing of the ruling National Council for the Defence of Democracy, known as *Imbonerakure*, was gradually forming into a militia group. He referred to allegations of National Council for the Defence of Democracy youths being trained and armed by some senior officers of the national army to serve as a fighting force for the ruling party.

He further advised that on 1 April, the *Imbonerakure* had been embroiled in a serious confrontation with young people from other opposition political parties, such as the Movement for Solidarity and Democracy and the National Liberation Forces, which had continued to increase the level of tension in the country. Yet, there was no effort by the Government to address the situation, thereby fuelling suspicions of its designs to entrench a one-party system in the country. He noted, however, that the Government had refuted the allegations and assured that preparations for the elections scheduled for 2015 were proceeding as planned.

The Under-Secretary-General noted that the increasing tension had affected the implementation of Security Council resolution 2137 (2014), in particular in the context of the provision of assistance by the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) to the Government in respect of the preparations for elections in 2015. The tenuous situation also had negative consequences on the transformation of BNUB into a United Nations country team, which had already started. He opined that the reluctance of the Government to take urgent action on the political tension was a systematic plan to achieve a one-party system in Burundi.

Most Security Council members expressed concern about the rising political tensions; some were concerned about the intimidation and violations of human rights by the ruling party, while others deplored the extremist activities of some extra-parliamentary opposition parties. They further condemned any recourse to

violence and reiterated their call for restraint by all stakeholders, including political parties and security agents in the country. They stressed that inclusive dialogue was essential for a peaceful electoral process in Burundi. Council members also underscored that the Arusha Agreement remained central to the democratic and peace process in the country.

The Security Council issued a press statement on 10 April expressing concern about the political tensions in Burundi and the continued restrictions on the press and on civil liberties, especially in the run-up to the 2015 elections. It also condemned any recourse to violence and expressed concern about reported acts of intimidation, harassment and violence committed by youth groups in Burundi. It underscored the urgent need for the Government of Burundi to address impunity, while respecting the right of due process. It reminded the political parties of their obligation to publicly condemn all political violence and acts of incitement to hatred or violence, in line with the Constitution of Burundi and the Arusha Agreement.

On 24 April, the Under-Secretary-General's briefing to the Security Council in consultations of the whole focused on the expulsion of a BNUB Security Chief by the Government of Burundi. The act was linked to a United Nations report that alleged the distribution of weapons to members of the youth league of the ruling party. Council members were concerned about the development and called for mutual understanding between the Government and BNUB. They underlined the significance of close partnership in the interest of the Burundian peace process, in particular in the light of the forthcoming elections scheduled for 2015. Some Council members urged the timely and smooth transformation of BNUB into the United Nations country team as per Security Council resolution 2137 (2014).

Central African Republic

On 10 April 2014, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2149 (2014) on the Central African Republic. This was a culmination of months of Council deliberation on the best way to restore peace and stability to the country.

The resolution established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and decided to transfer authority from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to MINUSCA on 15 September 2014. MINUSCA is mandated to assist the Transitional Authorities in restoring peace and stability to the country.

Resolution 2149 (2014) mandates MINUSCA to support the transition process, including efforts to enable the extension of State authority and the preservation of territorial integrity. MINUSCA is also mandated to protect civilians, monitor and report on the human rights situation, including to support the International Commission of Inquiry, and facilitate the immediate, full, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 24 April 2014, the Security Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Permanent Representative of Chile, Ambassador Cristián Barros Melet, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire. He gave a summary of

the Committee's discussions during informal consultations on 21 March and summarized the main findings contained in the final report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire pursuant to paragraph 19 of Security Council resolution 2101 (2013) as well as the discussion of the Group's findings during the Committee's subsequent informal consultations on 11 April.

Security Council members noted the appreciable strides being taken by Côte d'Ivoire towards economic recovery and the restoration of the security situation. They noted progress made in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants as well as security sector reform, national reconciliation and the fight against impunity in the country.

On 29 April, the Security Council adopted resolution 2153 (2014) lifting the ban on the importation of rough diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire and partially lifting the arms embargo, differentiating between lethal and non-lethal arms.

Guinea-Bissau

On 3 April 2014, the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in consultations, on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau. He advised that preparations for elections were proceeding smoothly, with support from various international partners. Over 700,000 voters had been registered, representing 95 per cent of the voter population. He expressed concern that some elements within the country were determined to derail the process through the intimidation of political personalities. He noted, however, that the situation was generally calm with participation by a fairly large number of political parties.

Following the briefing, a press statement was issued in which the Security Council acknowledged that funding and preparations for the upcoming presidential and legislative elections on 13 April 2014 were well on track in Guinea-Bissau. It further condemned the episodes of political violence and intimidation in the country and urged all national stakeholders to facilitate the conduct of peaceful and credible elections. It called upon all security services to respect constitutional order, including the electoral process, and to submit themselves fully to civilian control. The statement recalled the readiness of the Council to consider further measures, as necessary, including targeted sanctions against both civilian and military individuals who undermine efforts to restore constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau.

Mali

The Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Albert Koenders, on 23 April 2014. He noted that the restoration of constitutional order and the commencement of informal talks between the Government and armed groups were signs of hope for Mali to overcome its deep crisis. He pointed, however, to residual issues that portend serious consequences for security in the entire Sahel region and noted that the commitment of all stakeholders was required to consolidate and sustain peace and stability in Mali.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the naming of a new Prime Minister and his Government on 11 April, as well as the appointment on 23 April of the High Representative for Inter-Malian Inclusive Dialogue, Modibo

Keïta, had given impetus to the nation's determination to advance the peace process. He encouraged the Government of Mali and northern rebel groups to agree on a timeline and road map for formal peace talks within the context of the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement of 18 June 2013 and to implement their initial agreement on cantonment of 18 February 2014.

Mr. Koenders noted that Mali had an historic opportunity to capitalize on the significant presence of international military forces to forestall a relapse into rebellion.

In a press statement, Security Council members welcomed initiatives by the Government of Mali and regional and international partners to end the crisis, including the draft road map distributed by the Government of Mali to the Council during its visit to Mali from 1 to 3 February 2014. The members of the Council expressed their concern about the lack of progress on the peace talks and called upon the Government and the signatories and adherent armed groups to the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement, as well as other armed groups in the north of Mali that have cut off all ties with terrorist organizations and committed unconditionally to the Agreement to urgently agree on a road map with the goal of securing a durable political resolution to the crisis and long-term peace and stability throughout the country.

Sudan (Darfur)

On 3 April 2014, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2148 (2014), in which it endorsed the special report of the Secretary-General on the review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2014/138), as requested in resolution 2113 (2013). In that context, it endorsed the revised strategic priorities of protecting civilians, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance and ensuring the safety of humanitarian personnel; mediating between the Government of the Sudan and non-signatory armed movements on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, while taking into account ongoing democratic transformation at the national level; and supporting the mediation of community conflict, including through measures to address its root causes, in conjunction with the United Nations country team.

The Security Council was also briefed by the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, in consultations on the security situation in Darfur. He informed the Council of the activities of the Government's Rapid Support Forces and armed militia groups, as well as attacks by the non-signatory movements on Government forces, which had resulted in an escalation of violence in the region. Around 215,000 civilians had been displaced to date in 2014.

Mr. Chambas further highlighted the involvement of UNAMID in the crisis by protecting internally displaced persons from further violence and supporting the delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance. Consequently, he stressed that the current situation was negatively affecting the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and as such called upon the parties to de-escalate the situation. He also called for sustained national dialogue as a means to end the conflict and set the stage for national reconciliation.

Security Council members welcomed the briefing and expressed deep concern at the situation on the ground. They also expressed hope for an all-inclusive process that could bring about durable peace, security and stability in Darfur.

On 24 April, in his briefing to the Security Council, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, gave updates on the security, political, humanitarian and economic situations and on the status of the peace process in Darfur. He informed the Council that the activities of both the Rapid Support Forces and armed militia groups were exacerbating the tense situation in both the north and south of Darfur.

It was noted that the current situation was negatively affecting the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and that renewed response and cooperation at all levels were essential, while inclusive national dialogue was deemed vital to foster cohesion and the cessation of hostilities in the country.

Security Council members condemned the escalating violence, which had created a deeply troubling humanitarian situation. Some called for the Government of the Sudan to address all grievances in a genuine and transparent negotiation process and urged that restrictions on freedom of movement be removed to facilitate humanitarian access to internally displaced persons. Some other delegations urged non-signatory Darfur armed groups to engage in the Doha peace process and the national dialogue without further delay and preconditions, while one of them urged the Council to consider imposing targeted sanctions against leaders of hold-out rebel groups and called for providing prompt debt relief to and lifting unilateral economic sanctions from the Sudan.

Sudan/South Sudan and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

On 10 April 2014, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, briefed the Security Council in closed consultations, via videoteleconference, on the implementation by the Sudan and South Sudan of resolution 2046 (2012). He indicated that since his previous briefing to the Council in March, no significant progress had been achieved in the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012). The Presidents' Summit on 5 April had been important, but had not gone beyond reiterating statements of intent to resolve outstanding bilateral issues.

On the two areas, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, Mr. Menkerios informed the Security Council that the African Union Peace and Security Council had set a deadline of 30 April 2014 for the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) to resume negotiations on a political settlement.

Mr. Menkerios noted that the ongoing crisis in South Sudan had continued to affect the implementation of the 27 September 2012 Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. On Abyei, Mr. Menkerios noted that the situation remained tense and that Sudanese oil police and South Sudanese armed forces remained deployed in Abyei in violation of resolution 2046 (2012). He assured the Council that he would continue to work with both parties in collaboration with the Council and the African Union High-level Implementation Panel to facilitate negotiations between the parties towards

resolving disputes related to oil, security, citizenship, assets and their common border.

Security Council members were encouraged by the generally cordial relations between the Sudan and South Sudan and urged both countries to follow through on their stated commitments and take additional steps to resolve outstanding issues between them, including the final status of Abyei.

South Sudan

The Security Council was briefed in closed consultations on 10 April 2014 by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in South Sudan and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). He expressed concern about the continued violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed by both the Government of South Sudan and the SPLM/Army in opposition on 23 January 2014. He highlighted that both sides continued to seek military advantage in terms of territory and control of oil resources rather than engage sincerely in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led peace process in Addis Ababa.

The Under-Secretary-General also underscored the deepening humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, which had reached alarming proportions. He informed Security Council members that the situation was now being compounded by the onset of the rains and the risk of famine. Council members therefore called upon the international community to intensify humanitarian assistance to ameliorate the impact of the conflict on the population.

On relations between the Government of South Sudan and UNMISS, the Under-Secretary-General noted that the recent interventions by both the Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan, Hilde Johnson, had been crucial in de-escalating the situation. He also noted the public statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Sudan, in which he expressed the commitment of the Government to improve relations with UNMISS.

Security Council members urged the parties to resume dialogue within the framework of the mediation efforts by IGAD and to respect the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in the interest of an early return to peace and stability in South Sudan.

On 18 April, a press statement was issued expressing the outrage of Security Council members at the attacks by armed groups in South Sudan on 14 and 17 April which deliberately targeted civilians as well as UNMISS sites in Bentiu and Bor. They noted that such attacks might constitute a war crime.

The members of the Security Council called upon the Government of South Sudan to immediately take steps to ensure the safety of all civilians and UNMISS protection of civilian sites in South Sudan, to swiftly investigate these incidents, and to bring the perpetrators of these egregious acts to justice. They also called upon both parties to allow UNMISS to fully implement its mandate. All parties were urged to refrain from actions or statements that could further escalate the situation.

On 23 April, the Security Council met in consultations of the whole and was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović. The Under-

Secretary-General informed the Council of the deadly attacks in Bentiu and Bor, including internally displaced persons seeking protection in UNMISS sites. He called for urgent action by the Council to forestall a recurrence.

In his briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights informed the Security Council that the crisis in the country had resumed an ugly ethnic dimension, with the possibility of spreading to the entire country and even beyond. He reported that no place appeared safe for civilians since armed fighters attacked churches, mosques, hospitals and the premises of the UNMISS protection of civilian sites.

Security Council members condemned the killings and emphasized the need for perpetrators to be brought to justice. They underscored the primary responsibility of the Government of South Sudan to protect all its citizens and to maintain public order.

On 24 April, the Security Council issued a press statement in which members strongly deplored the systematic targeting of civilians based on their ethnicity. They also expressed grave concern about the mounting number of internally displaced persons, which was exacerbating the already dire humanitarian crisis. Council members reiterated their demand for an immediate end to all human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law and expressed their readiness to consider appropriate measures against those responsible. They also renewed their call upon the Government of South Sudan to immediately take steps to ensure the safety of all civilians, to swiftly investigate these incidents, and to bring the perpetrators of these heinous acts to justice. The members of the Council indicated their willingness to take additional measures, should attacks on civilians and violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement continue.

Western Sahara

On 16 April, the Security Council held a meeting in private with the countries contributing troops and police to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINURSO, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber.

On 17 April, the Security Council was briefed in consultations by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed members of the Security Council that the general situation in Western Sahara remained calm and stable. The ceasefire continued to hold, with no threats to it in the short or medium terms. That had been achieved through the conscientious efforts of MINURSO. He repeated his request for an additional 15 United Nations military observers to allow MINURSO to adequately implement its mandate.

On the humanitarian aspect, the Special Representative noted the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) programme on family visits by air and cultural seminars. He referred to the Mission's continued logistical support for the family visits programme, which had just resumed and the cooperation of the parties, which enabled UNHCR to smoothly implement its

programme on confidence-building measures to facilitate contact and communication between the Saharan refugees in the camps near Tindouf in Algeria and their families in the territory.

On demining activities, the Special Representative informed Security Council members that the Mission's Mine Action Coordination Centre had maintained a reduction rate of 85 per cent of cluster strike areas. He indicated that MINURSO would continue to improve cooperation with the Government of Morocco, the Frente Polisario and non-governmental organizations in carrying out that task.

The Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara advised the Security Council on the latest initiative to hold bilateral consultations and shuttle diplomacy with relevant stakeholders with a view to achieving a compromise and mutually acceptable political solution to the situation in Western Sahara. He also noted that the initiative had been welcomed by all stakeholders.

He noted that the substance of the negotiations remained unchanged despite the long period of talks without any progress. He emphasized that with the new approach, progress would rely upon the parties and neighbouring States. He called upon the parties and neighbouring countries to deepen their level of commitment to the talks and to both show flexibility in respect of compromise.

Security Council members expressed support for the ongoing United Nations-led approach and urged the parties, neighbouring countries and group of friends to deepen their commitment to the negotiation process. They affirmed that a mutually acceptable political solution was the only lasting political solution to the conflict. Several other members stated their support for Morocco's autonomy plan. Others called for improvement in the relations between Morocco and Algeria in order to help create a good atmosphere for the negotiations. They also commended MINURSO for its vital role in monitoring the ceasefire and for its contribution in demining activities and humanitarian measures. A number of delegations referred to the situation in the broader Sahel region and its impact on the conflict.

Some Security Council members expressed concern about alleged reports of human rights violations. All delegations noted the reforms undertaken by Morocco in the field of human rights and in particular welcomed the decision by the Government of Morocco to continue cooperating with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and its intention to respond to all human rights complaints referred to it by the National Council on Human Rights within a three-month time frame. Some members urged the parties to take additional steps to improve human rights practices in both Western Sahara and in the refugee camps. Other members were concerned about the possible politicization of the issue of human rights in Western Sahara. Some Council members expressed their concern about the situation of the population in the Tindouf camps in Algeria and requested a refugee registration of that population.

The Security Council adopted resolution 2152 (2014) extending the mandate of MINURSO until 30 April 2015. The resolution also reaffirmed the need for full respect for the military agreements reached with MINURSO with regard to the ceasefire and called upon the parties to adhere fully to those agreements. It further called upon the parties to continue negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would provide for the self-

determination of the people of Western Sahara. It reiterated that realism and a spirit of compromise were essential to achieve progress in the negotiations.

Europe

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

On 13 April 2014, the Security Council held a briefing in relation to the letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136).

The Security Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco. He informed the Council of increasing calls by some elements in Ukraine for secession. He also noted that the situation had assumed a violent dimension owing to the activities of unidentified armed personnel. The Assistant Secretary-General reiterated the call by the Secretary-General for all concerned to exercise maximum restraint, strictly adhere to the Charter of the United Nations and engage in direct negotiations.

He warned that the Ukrainian crisis would continue to deepen if steps were not taken to de-escalate the situation. He noted that it had the potential of spilling over to other parts of the region with grave consequences for international peace and security.

Security Council members called for restraint by all parties and expressed hope that the meeting among Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the European Union, scheduled for 17 April in Geneva, would provide an opportunity to promote a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

The Security Council convened again on 16 April and was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. He said that protest-related human rights violations in Ukraine must be urgently investigated and verified and security forces must maintain public order in accordance with human rights standards. The Assistant Secretary-General further noted that unless addressed as a matter of priority, the situation there risked significantly destabilizing the whole of Ukraine, and called upon those with influence to take immediate action to ensure a halt to the violence. He underscored the need to de-escalate the tension and violence and called upon all parties to commence an inclusive, sustained and meaningful national dialogue that accommodated the concerns of all those living in Ukraine, including minorities.

Security Council members had an exchange of views on the matter and called for restraint by all concerned parties, while underlining the importance of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

On 29 April, the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. He noted that the spirit of compromise that had emerged from the quadripartite meeting among Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United States and the European Union and had culminated in the joint Geneva Statement on Ukraine of 17 April appeared to have evaporated amid varying interpretations of the document and fresh violence in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

The Under-Secretary-General condemned the detention of a group of military monitors and Ukrainian staff of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since 25 April and called for their immediate release. He also decried the activities of militia groups and armed civilians that were springing up in cities across the region and urged expeditious work towards peace and stability.

Security Council members expressed concern about the disturbing turn of events in Ukraine and called for restraint. They reiterated the need for respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. On the issue of the detained OSCE military monitoring team, most members called for their release immediately and unconditionally.

Security Council members recognized the utility of the joint Geneva Statement to de-escalate the tension in Ukraine and called upon the parties to faithfully implement its provisions. They also called upon the parties to strictly adhere to the Charter of the United Nations.

Asia

Myanmar

On 17 April, the Security Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Vijay Nambiar, on the political and security situation in the country. He informed the Council of attacks on United Nations premises in Rakhine State, which had necessitated the relocation of about 170 personnel, amid increased polarization between Buddhist and Muslim populations. He also noted irregularities in the way the country's recent census had been conducted in Rakhine State. The Special Adviser welcomed progress towards a nationwide ceasefire made in talks between ethnic armed groups and the Government and noted the need to build trust on both sides.

Mr. Nambiar informed the Security Council of the Secretary-General's intention to increase the presence of the United Nations in Rakhine, being mindful of the security concerns in the State. He noted that that would require wider humanitarian access, better assurances of travel authorization for aid workers and steps to protect local staff in Rakhine in the event of armed attacks. He also informed the Council of an ongoing system-wide review that takes into consideration the conflict of sensitivities in the State.

Security Council members had an exchange of views on the issue and called upon the Government to urgently address communal violence in Rakhine and work diligently to achieve reconciliation between the Buddhist and Muslim communities.

Middle East

Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 29 April 2014, the Security Council held an open debate on the Middle East and was briefed by the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry. He reported that during the preceding nine months, there had been unprecedented efforts to advance the peace process. However, the efforts had faltered owing to the inability of the parties to bridge gaps between their positions,

leading up to the decision of Israel to suspend the talks following the announcement of a reconciliation agreement between the rival Palestinian factions Fatah and Hamas. The Quartet and regional and international stakeholders had been actively engaged in the peace effort, recognizing it as perhaps one of the last chances to achieve a two-State solution.

The Special Coordinator called upon the parties and all stakeholders to recognize this as a moment of truth. He cautioned that inaction could lead to crisis if care were not taken. He advocated joint reflection on the impasse in order to overcome it.

Member States expressed concern about the current impasse and called for the imperative to continue to support negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, since it was the only real solution to achieving the vision of two States living side by side in peace and security. Some regretted that Israel's actions had been linked to the Palestinian decision to participate in international treaties and conventions. Some emphasized that without Palestinian unity, there would be no future enduring agreements. Members also stated that any Palestinian Government must commit to the recognition of Israel, non-violence and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations.

Situation in the Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)

On 3 April 2014, the Security Council was briefed in closed consultations by the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, Sigrid Kaag. She updated the Council on the level of implementation of resolution 2118 (2013), which called for the removal and elimination of the chemical weapon stockpiles of the Syrian Arab Republic by the end of June 2014.

The security concerns prevalent in the Syrian Arab Republic were acknowledged by Member States. They stressed the need for the acceleration of the process of removal of the chemical weapon materials from the country, given that the deadline of 30 June 2014 for the completion of the operation was fast approaching.

There was also an acknowledgment of the continuing role of the United Nations in facilitating the completion of the operation. The imperative to continue to pursue the political track towards resolution of the Syrian crisis was also emphasized.

The Special Coordinator also briefed the Security Council on 23 April on progress made in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme.

On 17 April, the Security Council met again in closed consultations to discuss the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, in the light of the takeover of the Old City of Homs by Government forces. It was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs informed the Security Council of the dire humanitarian situation in Homs as a result of the latest fighting between Government forces and armed opposition groups. She urged the parties to

desist from the use of siege as a weapon of war and reminded them of their obligation to allow humanitarian access to populations in need.

The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs expressed concern about the outbreak of fighting in the Old City of Homs and urged the parties to return to the negotiation table. He reiterated the call by the Secretary-General for the warring parties to ensure the protection of civilians regardless of their political, religious or ethnic affiliation.

Security Council members expressed their grave concern about the humanitarian impact of heavy fighting on civilians in the Old City of Homs and the Al-Waer neighbourhood. They urged the immediate implementation of Council resolution 2139 (2014). In that connection, they supported the call by the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the Syrian Arab Republic, Lakhdar Brahimi, for the resumption of discussions between the Syrian authorities and a negotiating committee representing the civilians and fighters still trapped in the Old City of Homs as well as the inhabitants of the Al-Waer neighbourhood in order to reach a comprehensive agreement.

On 30 April, the Security Council was again briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, who informed the members of the continued violation by all parties of resolution 2139 (2014). She expressed concern about the indiscriminate attacks on civilians in contravention of human rights principles and international humanitarian law and said that United Nations agencies and their partners continued to provide millions of Syrians with humanitarian assistance in extremely difficult and challenging conditions; over 3 million children had been vaccinated as part of the polio campaign in April; food aid had been dispatched to just over 4 million people; and water and sanitation support had benefited nearly 17 million people, in particular in the besieged locations identified by the Council in its resolution 2139 (2014). She reported that there had been limited progress on the delivery of medical supplies to hard-to-reach areas and that there had not been any additional cross-border convoys through the Nusaybin/Qamishly crossing since 25 March. She called for pragmatic arrangements by the Council to achieve substantially greater cross-line and cross-border access, in particular to besieged locations, as well as recognition of the reality of United Nations founding values and the responsibility of a State to look after its own people being violated every day and act upon it.

Security Council members expressed concern about the non-implementation of resolution 2139 (2014), which had dire consequences for the humanitarian situation. They called upon the parties to live up to their obligations under international humanitarian law and take actions to put an end to the violence. They underscored the futility of seeking resolution of the conflict by military means and called upon the parties to return to the Geneva process without preconditions.

Yemen

On 24 April 2014, the Security Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, on the situation in the country. He informed the Council that the political transitional process in Yemen remained on track. He also noted the remarkable progress made by the 17-member Constitution Drafting Committee. The Special Adviser stressed that the issue of federalism was of major concern to the Committee

and noted that technical preparations regarding the review of the voters' register as well as registration were under way.

He identified the activities of Al-Qaida-affiliated groups throughout the country as a major threat to the ongoing political process and commended the efforts of the Government in combating that threat.

Security Council members were encouraged by the progress recorded in the work of the Constitution Drafting Committee and expressed a desire to see that work concluded within the agreed time frame. They looked forward to close cooperation between the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) and the Government of Yemen, regional partners and the Gulf Cooperation Council to ensure that spoilers were dealt with. They also expressed concern about the activities of Al-Qaida-related groups in Yemen, in particular in the south, and confirmed their support in the fight against terrorism.

Thematic issues and other matters

Human rights situations in the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic

On 9 April 2014, the Security Council was briefed in closed consultations by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Libya and Mali. She detailed the human rights violations prevalent in those countries, including targeted killing of civilians, executions, sexual violence, torture and illegal detentions. Emphasizing the role of justice in achieving sustainable peace, she underscored the role of the Council in ensuring accountability for impunity as a means to safeguard international peace and security. To that end, she called upon the Council to send an unequivocal message that human rights abuses would not go unpunished.

On the Syrian Arab Republic, the High Commissioner noted the continuing widespread systematic violation of human rights and international humanitarian laws by the Government, its militia and opposition groups. She also informed the Security Council that the Commission of Inquiry had reported an increase in the indiscriminate use of barrel bombs by the Government and its use of forced disappearance as a weapon to intimidate civilians sympathetic to the opposition. She urged the Council to exert influence on parties to the conflict and to refer human rights violations to the International Criminal Court. She also urged the Government to give full and unfettered access to human rights agencies and United Nations teams.

The High Commissioner commended UNMISS for its role in protecting civilians in South Sudan and referred to the interim report presented by the Mission to the Council in February 2014 documenting human rights abuses committed in the country. She informed the Council that a more comprehensive report was expected in April 2014. To aid transparency, she called upon the Government of South Sudan to provide further information on the investigations being carried out into the alleged involvement of several individuals in the killings of civilians in Juba.

On the Central African Republic, the High Commissioner drew attention to the urgent need for stronger international engagement with the country and pointed to the lack of functional governance and justice systems across the country. She

notified the Security Council that the Commission of Inquiry had commenced its investigations into human rights violations and had embarked on its first field mission, from 11 to 25 March 2014. She also informed the Council of the investigation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights into the incident of 29 March in Bangui. She called upon the Council to support the transitional authorities in Bangui to meet the February 2015 target date for presidential elections. The High Commissioner also called for the proposed United Nations peacekeeping mission to have a human rights component to enable it to address critical human rights issues.

Speaking on Libya, the High Commissioner noted the challenges to the rule of law which could precipitate an eventual breakdown and informed the Security Council of the suspension of activities of several law courts in the country as a result of sustained threats against judicial officers. While welcoming the efforts of the Government of Libya to ensure the trial of perpetrators of past crimes, she drew attention to the outstanding screening process of detainees.

While commending the Government of Mali for the remarkable advances it had made, the High Commissioner expressed concern about the fragile political situation in the country, in particular in its northern region. She highlighted the role of the Human Rights Division of MINUSMA in aiding the Government to implement its obligations under human rights and international humanitarian laws. Furthermore, she emphasized the need to address the regional dimension of the conflict in Mali in order to engender cooperation across the Sahel region.

Security Council members expressed their concern about the persistent violations of human rights and international humanitarian laws in these countries and cautioned the perpetrators of such heinous acts regarding their culpability under international law. They highlighted the imperative to protect human rights in particular in the light of the nexus between human rights and peace and security.

A majority of Security Council members called for the human rights violations in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court, while others urged the international community to proceed with caution in order not to exacerbate the tenuous situation. They called upon the Government of South Sudan and the various parties to cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry. Additionally, the Council decried the sectarian and religious nature of the conflict in the Central African Republic and stressed the need for a multidimensional mission in the country with a strong human right component to support the Commission of Inquiry. With regard to Libya, the Council expressed its frustration about the lack of progress in relation to the screening of detainees despite the Government's claims to the contrary and the extrajudicial activities of armed groups.

Threats to international peace and security: prevention and fight against genocide

On 16 April, Security Council members were briefed by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and the former Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, Ambassador Colin Keating, on the topic "Prevention and fight against genocide". The briefings were to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, during which the Hutu and others who were opposed to the genocide were also killed.

In his briefing, the Deputy Secretary-General alluded to the speech given by the Secretary-General in Kigali on 7 April describing the genocide in Rwanda as the darkest chapter in human history. He underlined the necessity for the Security Council to recall the event and take steps to improve its response to early warning signs that might have prevented such an occurrence. He noted the need to seek justice for the victims and survivors, as well as the imperative for prevention of genocide in all parts of the world. He encouraged others to follow Rwanda's lead and institutionalize prevention mechanisms against genocide.

In his briefing, Ambassador Colin Keating, who was the President of the Security Council in April 1994, started by paying tribute to the victims and survivors of the genocide. He apologized for the Security Council's inaction and blamed the massacre of over 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus on the failure of the Council to recognize early signs that preceded the genocide and the Secretariat for failing to provide useful information to that end.

Ambassador Keating noted that although the Security Council had lacked the political will to act at that time, efforts had been made by some Council members to stop the genocide. He gave the example of the draft resolution submitted by Argentina, New Zealand and Nigeria, among others, to reinforce the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), which was vetoed. He also informed the Council of the efforts of the Presidency of the Council to organize daily meetings with troop-contributing countries on the issue. He acknowledged the Council members that had joined with New Zealand in 1994 to condemn the genocide and to reinforce UNAMIR, including Argentina, the Czech Republic, Djibouti, Nigeria and Spain.

Ambassador Keating underscored the importance of horizon-scanning and commended the mainstreaming of the responsibility to protect concept as a demonstration that lessons had indeed been learned.

Security Council members shared the opinion of the briefers that the genocide in Rwanda had been a result of lack of political will to act on the part of the international community. They called for the effective strengthening of international and regional cooperation to avoid a repetition of the tragedy in Rwanda in the future and for enhancing national capacities with respect to early warning. Some members noted that the unfolding scenarios in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic were indications that the world could still be susceptible to the Rwandan experience if steps were not taken to address the issues. They stressed the role of the work of international criminal tribunals and courts (including the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court) to end impunity and ensure accountability for genocide and other serious international crimes.

The Security Council also unanimously adopted resolution 2150 (2014) on the prevention and fight against genocide. The resolution called upon States to recommit to prevent and fight against genocide and other serious crimes under international law and reaffirmed the stipulations in the 2005 World Summit Outcome on the responsibility to protect. It underscored the importance of taking into account lessons learned from the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, during which Hutu and others who opposed the genocide were also killed. The resolution also condemned any denial of the genocide. It further recognized the responsibility of States to respect and ensure the human rights of their citizens as

well as other individuals within their territory and called for intensified regional and international cooperation towards preventing and punishing the crime of genocide.

In the resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to ensure greater collaboration among existing early warning mechanisms for genocide prevention and other serious international crimes in order to facilitate response to the threat. The resolution underscored the significance of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and called upon States to become parties to it as soon as possible.

The resolution called upon all States to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and the Government of Rwanda in the arrest and prosecution of the remaining nine fugitives indicted by the Tribunal, as well as all other fugitives accused of genocide residing on their territories, including leaders of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda.

Women and peace and security: sexual violence in conflict

On 25 April 2014, the Security Council held an open debate on women and peace and security with the subtheme "Sexual violence in armed conflict". In his briefing, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern about the impact of sexual violence on the human rights and dignity of victims and noted that it had devastating consequences for both the individual and society as a whole. He stressed that with political will on the part of Governments, the United Nations team of experts on the rule of law and sexual violence in conflict could assist in building capacity to fight impunity for crimes of sexual violence, helping Governments to address reforms to the military and criminal justice systems and other crucial areas.

The Secretary-General noted the deployment of women protection advisers in peacekeeping and special political missions and stressed that their expertise on human rights, gender analysis and peace and security was helping to mainstream the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence into peacekeeping and special political missions. He stressed the need for United Nations actors and political leaders to work together to stop rights abuses before they occurred and pledged the renewed commitment of the United Nations to better meeting the human rights responsibilities set by Member States through the Rights up Front initiative. He counted on the Security Council's continued leadership and support as they worked together to eliminate sexual violence in conflict.

The Security Council was also briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura. She informed the Council that the circle of stakeholders in addressing sexual violence had dramatically expanded to include political leaders at the highest level, uniformed peacekeepers, mediators, ceasefire monitors, war crime prosecutors and the full range of civilian protection, justice and security sector actors. She noted the great emphasis that the international community had placed on combating impunity as well as the attitude of zero tolerance it had adopted towards sexual violence. The Special Representative also noted that the critical challenge now being faced was to convert political will to practical action and transform resolutions into solutions, with a view to engendering change at the national level. In that connection, she emphasized the need to strengthen national ownership, leadership and responsibility.

Security Council members agreed on the need for urgent action to put an end to sexual violence in armed conflict as well as the need for perpetrators of such acts to be held accountable.

Maintenance of international peace and security: security sector reform

On 28 April 2014, the Security Council held an open debate on security sector reform. It was briefed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who noted that security sector reform was designed to enhance the safety of the lives of citizens. He also noted that the United Nations had improved its delivery capacity through the Security Sector Reform Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the inter-agency Security Sector Reform Task Force. It had developed standards and guidance to strengthen the impact of its efforts.

The Secretary-General noted, however, that more remained to be done and underscored the need for national security services to have the capacity to perform their duties, which required improved mapping of needs and gaps, as well as facilitating a coordinated response from partners. He highlighted the importance of reflection on the institutional capacities within the United Nations, on the links to other areas such as the rule of law and human rights, and on how to ensure the flexible resources needed to address conditions on the ground.

Security Council members underscored the need for national ownership of the security sector reform process, stressing that Governments had the sovereign right and primary responsibility for determining national approach and priorities. Some stressed that security sector reform processes must be inclusive, ensuring the participation of civil society, including women, in the discussion and drafting of policies. Several noted that reform must extend beyond the traditional security pillars, namely, the police, army and intelligence agencies, into broader peacebuilding and development efforts and that a security sector operated under the framework of the rule of law could strengthen public confidence in the State concerned. Others called upon the United Nations to deepen its partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in order to optimize results.

The Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2151 (2014), stressing that reforming the security sector in post-conflict environments was critical to the consolidation of peace and stability, reiterating the centrality of national ownership for security sector reform processes and recognizing the importance of considering host country perspectives in the formulation of relevant peacekeeping and special political mission mandates. It encouraged States to take the lead in defining an inclusive national vision on security sector reform, informed by the needs of their populations.

The Security Council recognized that security sector reform must be in support of, and informed by, broader national political processes that were inclusive of all segments of society, resolving to link reform to such efforts.

Wrap-up session: implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council S/2010/507

On 30 April 2014, the Security Council held a private wrap-up session on the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council S/2010/507. Non-Council members were invited to participate in the meeting as observers.

Members highlighted areas where the Security Council had been successful in addressing issues on its agenda, such as the briefing on the prevention of genocide and sexual violence in conflict and the briefing designed to draw attention to the looming crisis in Burundi. They also remarked on the Council's first stand-alone resolution on security sector reform. At the same time, Council members expressed views on the situations in South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine and highlighted the need to work concertedly towards more effective action by the Council.